



O'Donnell, Weiss & Mattei, P.C.

Do I Need an Elder Law Attorney?

The National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) defines elder law by the client to be served, rather than by the type of law practiced by the attorney. In other words, a lawyer who practices in the area of elder law has a specific type of client, seniors. Legal problems that affect the elderly are growing in number, and becoming more complex. Moreover, a single action taken by a senior citizen can have unwanted and unintended legal effects if consultation with an elder law attorney is not undertaken.

Elder Law Attorneys often handle general estate planning, including Wills and planning for incapacity. However, as people age, questions often arise concerning potential need for long term care, and the attendant concerns about how to pay for such care. Agents appointed under a Power of Attorney document, often adult children, are unsure as to how to proceed to best protect mom or dad's assets. An elder law attorney can help prevent spousal impoverishment if a spouse must enter a nursing home. Locating appropriate care and coordinating resources, public and private, to pay for that care are part of an elder law practice. Growing old does not necessarily mean placement in a nursing home is required. Elder law attorneys can help with providing options, and helping families become knowledgeable in resources available.

Seniors have unique concerns and issues, and individuals have specific needs that the entire population may not share. Insurance issues, including Medicare and Medical Assistance are common. Failure to plan on the part of the senior may result in a need for a guardianship, or an inappropriate placement in a long term care facility. Being elderly does not automatically equal being incompetent, but when such issues do present themselves, good planning can be extremely valuable. It happens all too often that even well meaning assistance can have disastrous results in this area of law, which is why consulting with an Elder Law Attorney is not only helpful, but necessary.

***Call today and talk to one of our elder law attorneys
(610) 323-2800***